

WE CLAIM

1. In a point of sale system for acquiring bar code data relating to a transaction, wherein a first bar code scanner is arranged to scan bar codes and provide data relating to scanned bar codes to a processor, the improvement comprising a second portable bar code scanner, said second scanner including a radio module for acting as a slave unit using a master-slave data communication protocol and said second scanner including an identifying bar code, and wherein there is provided a master radio module associated with said point of sale system and wherein said master radio module is arranged to act as a master for communication with said slave radio module in response to reading of said identifying bar code.

2. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said identifying bar code is representative of a data communication address for said slave radio.

3. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said processor includes a memory having a data communication address for said slave radio associated with data representing said identifying bar code.

4. The improvement specified in claim 1 wherein said master radio module is arranged to discontinue acting as a master for communication with said slave radio module in response to a further reading of said identifying bar code.

5. A method for establishing a master/slave data communication link, comprising:
providing a machine readable identification device on a slave unit;
reading said identification device with a reader associated with said master unit to obtain

identification data;

determining a slave address of said slave unit from said identification data; and

operating said master unit to associate with said slave unit.

6. A method for reading bar codes on items to be purchased, comprising:

providing a portable bar code reader having a slave radio module having a slave address for providing data communication and an identifying bar code on said reader;

reading said identifying bar code with a second bar code reader associated with a master radio module and a data processor to obtain identifying data;

determining said slave address using said identifying data;

operating said master unit to associate with said slave unit; and

using selectively said portable bar code reader and said second bar code reader to read bar codes and provide data to said processor.

7. A portable bar code scanner comprising a housing enclosing a slave radio data transceiver having a network address and an optical bar code reader and a bar code on the exterior of said housing, said bar code being associated with said network address.

8. A terminal having a processor, a bar code reader, a master radio module for providing data communications and a program for operating said processor, said program being arranged to operate said bar code reader and provide data to said processor, operate said

processor to recognize said data as data identifying a slave unit and operate said master radio module to conduct data communications with said slave unit.

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